



Dental Health Foundation
Ireland

Review

2015 - 2018

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Chair's Address

I am pleased to present a report on the achievements of the Dental Health Foundation for the period 2015 – 2018.

The Dental Health Foundation has, since its establishment, been at the forefront of oral health promotion in Ireland. It's Strategic Plan 2015-2017 set out ambitious, but achievable goals and a practical integrated programme of work for effective oral health promotion. In pursuing these goals, the Foundation worked closely with State bodies, the oral healthcare profession, consumer groups, the community and education sectors.

The Dental Health Foundation (DHF) emerged from within organised dentistry in 1977 to form an independent body. The DHF is governed by a voluntary Board of Trustees which includes representation from public and private dental practice. Funding is received from the Department of Health. Since the formation of the Health Service Executive (HSE) DHF is now part funded by the HSE and Department of Health.

The goal of the Foundation is to promote oral health and to highlight the overall health benefits that can be achieved through improvement in an individual's oral health.

A key focus is raising the public's awareness of the impact of lifestyle behaviours, the links between oral and general health and the common risk factors associated with poor dietary choices. This includes excess sugar consumption and snacking, use of tobacco products, excessive alcohol use, poor hygiene, injury risk and trauma, stress and control, and socio-economic factors. The Foundation advocates for supportive environments for oral health by providing reliable, quality and easily accessible data, working with stakeholders on targeted projects and ensuring excellent and effective communication and collaboration between relevant partners and stakeholders.

In addition to its Oral Health Promotion work programme the DHF provides Secretariat Services to the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health since 2004 and to the National Oral Health Policy since 2013. The Policy will ensure a single vision of oral health services for the future and will shape the work of the DHF in the coming years.

I wish to thank the staff of the Foundation for their dedication and commitment which has ensured the effective delivery of the DHF work programme.

Dr Mary Coleman

Chair

Introduction

This report sets out the work and achievements of the Dental Health Foundation during the period 2015 – 2018 which was guided by the DHF Strategy 2015 – 2017. These achievements are as a direct result of this collaborative work combined with the dedicated work of the Foundation's staff, the support and commitment of the DHF Trustees.

The Dental Health Foundation 2015 - 2017 Strategy was guided by the following objectives:

1. Support to the Department of Health
2. Promoting Excellence
3. Empowering People
4. Advocacy and Communications

The DHF has developed a reputation for excellence and for the delivery of effective Oral Health Promotion interventions and resources in response to the needs of the population. Using a multi-strategy evidence based approach the DHF provides advice and information to reduce health inequalities and to empower the public to make healthier lifestyle choices. The DHF informs government and decision makers about specific issues that will have an impact on the oral health and the wellbeing of the citizens of Ireland. Since its establishment, the DHF has worked with a wide variety of interested parties to champion change. The DHF, in partnership with the Department of Health (DoH) and the Health Service Executive (HSE), has acted as a central facilitator and strategist in placing oral health issues and solutions on the national health agenda. The DHF is strongly committed to the delivery of its work programme to ensure a cost effective public health approach.

As Chief Executive of the Dental Health Foundation I would like to thank all those who have supported the organisation in the past, I look forward to continuing to work with them and to forging new collaborative partnerships in the future.

Patricia Gilsenan O'Neill

Chief Executive

Executive Summary

The Dental Health Foundation has concentrated on four strategic objectives in order to implement its work programme and to improve the oral health of the citizens of Ireland.

In its support role to the Department of Health DHF provides secretariat services to the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health and to the policy development group of the National Oral Health Policy. DHF also provides the Department with information and advice regarding oral health promotion.

DHF delivers excellence through collaboration and by ensuring the ongoing effective dissemination of evidence-based publications and resources. The DHF Excellence in Practice Awards recognises outstanding efforts in oral health improvement and places oral health promotion on the Agenda in a variety of settings. DHF in collaboration with the National University of Ireland Galway and the Health Service Executive delivers a one year Specialist Certificate in Health Promotion (Oral Health) on an annual basis. This course has been designed to develop and improve oral health promotion skills and career advancement opportunities for dental health professionals.

DHF empowers people to improve their health and wellbeing through the ongoing development of oral health promotion messages. The key focus for this is raising awareness of the impact of lifestyle behaviours, the links between oral and general health and the common risk factors associated with poor dietary choices. In this regard DHF has collaborated with the Irish Children's Arthritis Network, Capuchin Day Centre, Irish Men's Sheds Association, Special Olympics Ireland, National Dairy Council MooCrew School Milk Scheme and provides resources to the Preschool Services Health Promotion Training Programme 'Healthy Ireland Smart Start Programme'.

The Foundation provides strong advocacy to ensure the inclusion of oral health matters on the national agenda and contributes to a range of public policies. DHF uses every opportunity to reduce health inequalities, promote health equity and strive for health and wellbeing by making every contact count. Membership includes the Alcohol Health Alliance, Children's Rights Alliance, HPV Vaccination Alliance, Healthy Ireland Network and is a founding member of Mouth Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Ireland since 2009.

Good communications (both internal and external) is one of DHF's top priorities in meeting its Strategic Objectives. This will ensure the effective dissemination of the organisation's holistic health promotion messaging in an open, clear, concise, consistent, simple, timely and relevant manner.

1. Support to the Department of Health

The Foundation continues its support to the Minister for Health and the Department of Health by way of Secretariat provision to the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health in giving effect to the decisions and extensive work programme of the Expert Body.

The DHF also continues its support role to the Department of Health by the provision of Secretariat services to the policy development group of the National Oral Health Policy.

Additionally, the DHF provides information and advice to the Department in its core role of oral health promotion.

Secretariat Services – the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health

The Dental Health Foundation accepted an invitation from the Minister for Health and Children, Micheál Martin TD in 2004 to act as Secretariat to the Expert Body. In November 2017 the Minister for Health Simon Harris TD appointed a new Expert Body for a five year term. Substantial management and secretarial support has been, and continues to be, provided by the Dental Health Foundation. The Secretariat's responsibilities fall into seven main categories:

- The Secretariat provides assistance to the Expert Body in collating and organising material to enable the Expert Body to determine and constantly update the highest quality assurance standards throughout the fluoridation process.
- The Secretariat provides assistance in collating and reviewing research material in the areas identified by the Forum (e.g. legislation and regulation, international best practice, use of fluoride toothpaste and longitudinal research surveys) being undertaken by other bodies.
- The Secretariat organises and supports meetings of the Expert Body and sub-committees, dealing with day-to-day communications with the industry, the public and professionals, managing and administering third party services. It also ensures appropriate financial and administrative records are maintained.
- In addition to the work involved in directly supporting and overseeing the implementation of the Expert Body's Action Plan, the Secretariat is continuously engaged in activities related to responding to requests for information and technical advice from the Minister

and officials of the Department of Health, persons in professional practice, public bodies, public representatives, and Oireachtas Committees.

- The Expert Body is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2014. All FOI requests in relation to the Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health are processed by the Dental Health Foundation.
- Additionally, the Secretariat designed, developed and manages the Expert Body website, which hosts information relating to the ongoing work of the Body.
- The Secretariat also attends and participates in relevant conferences, liaising with relevant authorities and bodies within the island of Ireland and overseas on behalf of the Expert Body as appropriate.

Secretariat Services – the National Oral Health Policy

Through its role as Secretariat the Dental Health Foundation is the cornerstone in relation to the development of the National Oral Health Policy. The support provided by the Foundation manifests in the coordination of the three workstreams which comprise the Policy's development; needs assessment, resource review, and stakeholder consultation, and the various projects operating therein. Within this, support has been provided to working groups informing the aforementioned workstreams including the Academic and Practitioners References Groups, the Education and Training Review Group, and an international panel of experts providing quality assurance across the project.

Contribution to the overall policy development management team has included the following:

- Assisting in collating and reviewing research material in the areas identified by the working groups.
- Organising and supporting meetings of the working groups.
- Development of overall National Oral Health Policy theoretical framework.
- Design and development of project governance structures.
- Contributing to planning and allocation of work and targets for Groups within varying work streams.
- Conducting systematic literature reviews in order to inform evidence base for policy.

- Contributing to the design and implementation of a national public consultation process.
- Coordination of communication and engagement with stakeholders.
- Design and development of reports reflecting the inputs of the multidisciplinary Academic Reference Group.
- Communication of outcomes and requirements across Reference Groups.
- Organisation of relevant workshops.
- Representing the policy development project management team at national and international conferences.
- Assembly and dissemination of library of relevant and up to date literature.
- Ensuring appropriate financial and administrative records are maintained.
- Development and ongoing management of a records management system to ensure the effective collation of all policy documentation.

2. Promoting Excellence

The DHF recognises the need for collaboration across the healthcare sector and works continually with both health and allied health professionals ensuring the effective dissemination of evidence-based information, from both national and international sources. Thus ensuring that people in Ireland are adequately informed and gain from continuing innovation and development in the delivery of oral care prevention.

Orthodontic Therapists

The Dental Health Foundation provided funding for the training of two HSE suitably qualified students to train as an Orthodontic Therapist.

This training programme is an expansion of the pilot programme undertaken by the HSE in 2014/2015 where two suitably qualified staff were successfully trained. Early indicators of this pilot show that Orthodontic Therapists have had a significant impact on waiting lists in one HSE, Community Health Organisation area.

This continuing professional development programme is accredited by the Dental Council, students must be registered with the Dental Council in order to practice. The Orthodontic Therapy Programme is provided by the Dublin Dental School and Hospital.

Fluoride and Caring for Children's Teeth (FACCT) Study

The Dental Health Foundation provided funding for and recruited three Dentists and two Dental Nurses to work as part of the FACCT fieldwork team working in the greater Dublin Area from late 2016 to April 2017.

The aim of the 6-year research FACCT programme is to evaluate the impact and outcome of the change in policy on water fluoridation (2007) and on the use of fluoride toothpaste (2002) on dental caries and enamel fluorosis in Irish children.

The study involves the examination of two age groups of children based on whether their permanent incisors were formed prior to (age 12, born 2001) or after (age 5, born 2008) the reduction in fluoride levels in water.

The first part of this study was completed in 2013/14. It involved the clinical measurement of dental caries and enamel fluorosis using standard epidemiological criteria conducted on a representative sample of children in Junior infants (age 5, caries only) and 6th classes (age

12, caries and fluorosis) in fluoridated and non-fluoridated areas of Cork, Kerry and Dublin. The fieldwork that was conducted in 2013/14 was repeated in 2016/17 for children in 2nd class (age 8) who participated in the study when they were aged 5 in 2013/4.

Specialist Certificate in Health Promotion (Oral Health)

The Dental Health Foundation, in collaboration with the National University of Ireland, Galway and the Health Service Executive, delivers a one year Specialist Certificate in Health Promotion (Oral Health) on an annual basis. The course is delivered through a combination of distance and classroom based learning.

The course was initiated in 1999 by the Dental Health Foundation, the Society of Chief and Principal Dental Surgeons in Ireland, and the National University of Ireland, Galway, who put in place the necessary training and accreditation programme for dental health professionals to develop and improve their oral health promotion skills while at the same time offering career advancement opportunities for course participants.

The curriculum was developed collaboratively by National University of Ireland, Galway, the Dental Health Foundation and Dr Mary O'Farrell, former Principal Dental Surgeon with the Health Service Executive Dublin North East. This curriculum was revised in 2009 and 2016, which saw the materials uploaded to Blackboard, NUI Galway's Virtual Learning Environment.

The primary focus of this course is to provide students with professional education and training in the principles and practice of Health Promotion as applied to the promotion of oral health. The course is particularly aimed at practitioners who work in the oral health field (e.g. dentists, dental nurses, dental hygienists) and others in a position to promote oral health (e.g. public health nurses, General Practitioners, dieticians, nurses, special needs assistants).

The course is delivered through a combination of distance and classroom based learning by the National University of Ireland, Galway via three modules: the first two; Concepts and Principles of Health Promotion and Oral Health Promotion; include workshop participation and self-paced instructional materials and assignments for home study, and the Project Development module consisting of project work. Examinations are by continuous assessment throughout the year, and submission of a final year project.

Excellence in Practice Awards

The Foundation has put in place support mechanisms for the preparation and training of health professionals, and also to increase an evidenced based approach to oral health promotion programme development. To encourage uptake of this approach, the DHF has pursued these aspects through award schemes.

The DHF Excellence in Practice Awards recognise outstanding efforts in oral health improvement. Winning an Award can be a great way to energise oral health programs and get recognition in-house, in the community, and nationally among peers.

The awards programme is an annual programme that the organisation has valued as a means of placing oral health promotion on the agenda in a variety of settings. The awards include the following:

DHF Award for Best Capstone Portfolio for the BSc in Dental Practice Management & Oral Health Promotion, Athlone Institute of Technology

The Dental Health Foundation Award for Best Capstone Portfolio for the BSc in Dental Practice Management and Oral Health Promotion was established in 2018. The Capstone Portfolio is based on a chosen subject within the Dental Practice Management or Oral Health Promotion theme. The Capstone Portfolio is written in thesis format, 5000 words maximum where a critical review of relevant literature involving a comprehensive search of current and historic published articles and journals within the dental practice management and oral healthcare sector is conducted. The Capstone Portfolio should communicate ideas effectively in written, oral and visual format. Included in the assignment students are expected to source, evaluate, summaries and reference information. The student should demonstrate self-directed independent learning while applying effective research methods.

DHF Award for Best Community Oral Health Project – Dental Hygiene Diploma Course, DDUH

The Dental Health Foundation Award for Best Oral Health Project was established in 2015. The award is presented to the best student project from the Dental Hygiene Diploma Course in the Dublin Dental University Hospital, Trinity College. The project is based on a critical review of scientific literature involving a comprehensive search of

relevant published articles on a specific population group with specific oral healthcare issues. It is written in a thesis format, 3000 words maximum. The project and defence of the project forms part of the final examinations.

Moloney Award

The Moloney Award was established in 2003 to recognise the outstanding contribution of the late Dr Joe Moloney to oral health promotion in Ireland, as a founding member of the Dental Health Foundation and his lifetime contribution to the Irish Dental Association (IDA). It is presented at the IDA's annual scientific conference.

Between 2003 and 2014 the Award was presented to an individual or group of dentists judged as Best Table Demonstration by a panel of judges. Competitors were judged on detailed criteria including originality, usefulness and presentation. A key requirement of the judging criteria was that each demonstration presented a practical component applicable to general dental practice. A hands-on, interactive approach was encouraged.

Following consultation between the IDA and the DHF it was agreed to change the format of the Award. Since 2015 the Moloney Award has been awarded to an outstanding Irish presenter/lecturer at the IDA's annual scientific conference, chosen by the delegates who nominate the presenter of choice.

Irish Society for Disability and Oral Health (ISDH) Awards

The ISDH was established in 2002. It serves to promote, preserve and protect the oral health of people with disabilities. The special care dentistry awards are presented by the Dental Health Foundation at the annual ISDH Conference.

Annual Special Care Dentistry Award

The society awarded this prize for the best essay, case-report or completed project on any aspect of Special Care Dentistry. Applicants for the prize must be a current member of the ISDH. A team working together on a project may enter. In 2018 the ISDH removed this award to focus on the DCP Award, Student/Newly Qualified Professional Award and Biennial ISDH Travel Bursary (see below).

Annual Special Care Dental Care Professional (DCP) Award

The society awards the prize for the best essay, case-report or completed project on any aspect of Special Care Dentistry by a dental nurse, hygienist, oral health promoter or other non-dental healthcare professional. The prize is confined to dental care professionals and non-dental healthcare professionals resident on the island of Ireland. A team working together on a project may enter.

Student/ Newly Qualified Professional Award

The society awards the prize for the best essay, case-report or completed project on any aspect of Special Care Dentistry by an undergraduate student or a newly qualified dental professional on the island of Ireland. The prize is confined to undergraduate students or newly qualified dental professionals (first year post-qualification) on the island of Ireland.

For all awards it is a requirement that the work would not have been presented elsewhere nor been awarded a prize previously.

Biennial ISDH Travel Bursary

This travel bursary will assist with the cost of attending the Biennial Congress of the International Association of Disability and Oral Health in order to make a scientific oral or poster presentation. Applicants for the prize must be a current member of the Society.

The Oral Health Promotion Research Group Ireland Bursary

The OHPRG aims to raise the status of oral health promotion through providing a forum for dissemination of developments in oral health promotion research, policy and practice.

In support of this aim the Dental Health Foundation Bursary is presented at the OHPRG Ireland Annual Conference. The intention is that the successful candidate/s will use the award to implement the proposal submitted by them.

The bursary may be awarded in full to one project or may be divided amongst a number of smaller projects. The bursary may also be withheld. These decisions will be made at the discretion of the judges.

The applicant must be a current member of the Oral Health Promotion Research Group (Irish Link). A team working together on a project may submit proposals. It is a requirement that the work should not have been presented elsewhere nor have been awarded a prize previously.

Irish Division / DHF Research in Primary - Dental Care Award

The IADR Irish Division / DHF Research in Primary Dental Care Award is presented to support research by investigators and clinicians who mainly work in the areas of dental public health and health promotion.

Health services research is the primary focus of the award and this may include epidemiology, audit, health promotion or research into other health service issues. The award is open to all members of the dental team - dental nurses, dental hygienists as well as dentists.

The prize is awarded by the Dental Health Foundation at the IADR Irish Division Annual Conference.

Information Sessions / Presentations

The Dental Health Foundation (DHF) continually fosters a knowledge and understanding of its role as a source of ongoing support and information in Oral Health Promotion by also providing information packs and resources to oral health / dental graduates. Since 2015 the Foundation delivers presentations to 2nd Year Dental Nurse Students in Dublin Dental University Hospital and since 2016 to students of the BSc in Dental Practice Management with Oral Health Promotion and Higher Certificate in Science in Dental Nursing, Athlone Institute of Technology. The DHF also delivered a presentation and provides samples of resources to the Society of Chief and Principal Dental Surgeons at their annual meeting in 2017.

3. Empowering People

The DHF continues to empower people to improve their health and wellbeing through the ongoing development of oral health promotion messages. These messages identify the causes of oral ill health and how to prevent or control them, including appropriate use of fluoride toothpaste and effective oral health practices.

A key focus is on raising the public's awareness of the impact of lifestyle behaviours, the links between oral and general health and the common risk factors associated with poor dietary choices. This includes excess sugar consumption and snacking, use of tobacco products, excessive alcohol use, poor hygiene, injury risk and trauma, stress and control, and socio-economic factors.

Using a multi-sectoral partnership approach the DHF fosters links within education, community and care settings ensuring that needs and priorities form the basis of all initiatives. Specific consideration is given to the marginalised and vulnerable to ensure appropriate information and education is developed and communicated effectively to allow for early intervention.

Promotion of Children's Oral Health, 0-8 year olds, in the Traveller Community

The Dental Health Foundation in collaboration with the Mid-West Primary Healthcare Network for Travellers (Limerick City, West Limerick, Clare and North Tipperary), launched a project to improve the oral health of 0-8 year olds in the Traveller Community, on 15th April 2015 in Limerick.

As part of the Project, training was delivered in four sessions by Mrs Margaret O'Malley, Oral Health Promoter, HSE West, to Community Health Workers during March and April 2015. Training was provided to increase their knowledge and understanding of good oral health and the importance of maintaining it from birth. All of the Community Health Workers successfully completed the course in Children's Oral Health (0-8 year olds) and were presented with a Certificate of Achievement on Wednesday 15th April 2015.

These trained Community Health Workers now have the skills and confidence to deliver this information within their community, specifically to the parents of 0-8 year olds in the Traveller Community. They deliver five key messages to these parents:

1. Clean your baby's gums and teeth from birth

2. The main causes of tooth decay is regularly eating or drinking sugary foods and drinks and not cleaning your gums and teeth properly
3. It's not the amount of sugar in food or drink that causes damage to your teeth, it's the number of times you have sugar
4. Help your child brush their teeth twice a day
5. Always keep dental appointments

These messages help parents to understand the causes of tooth decay and how to prevent it, the importance of diet in relation to oral health, the importance of effective assisted tooth brushing twice a day (morning and night) and why it is important to keep dental appointments.

This is an inclusive approach to addressing risk factors and preventing oral diseases while empowering people to take action to protect and be responsible for their own oral health. The Dental Health Foundation, along with its partners in this important initiative, is delighted to be taking such a positive step to improve the oral health of children in the Traveller Community in Ireland. It is through cost effective initiatives like this, where a real difference in promoting good oral health and well-being can be made.

Evaluation has been built into the project from the outset. Pre and post training questionnaires were completed by the Community Health Workers. Additionally, on the Community Health Workers first visit to parents they asked some survey questions. Parents were asked the same questions at the end of the six month evaluation period. Following this initial six month period a focus group was held with the Community Health Workers to discuss feedback received from parents, the Community Health Workers experience in delivering the project and changes to knowledge, attitudes and behaviour within the Traveller Community. A further evaluation will be conducted in 2019 to assess the project on an ongoing basis in each area.

National Dairy Council – MooCrew School Milk Scheme

The National Dairy Council (NDC) provides extensive primary school resources to promote the School Milk Scheme, including lesson plans and activities around Healthy Eating and Physical Activity (www.moocrew.ie). On the invitation of the NDC the DHF have worked in conjunction with them to develop a Dental Health Lesson place for inclusion in the NDC new suite of lesson plans and resources being delivered to schools in December 2018. The NDC plan to distribute free (non-branded) toothbrushes to children registered for School Milk in December 2018.

Healthy Ireland Smart Start Programme

Since 2017 oral health information resource packs have been provided by the DHF as part of the Pre-School Services on the Healthy Ireland Smart Start Programme. The Pre-school Health Promotion training programme is the result of over a decade of collaborative working led by the HSE Department of Health Promotion and Improvement in partnership with National Childhood Network, to ensure children in the pre-school settings are supported to adopt healthy lifestyle behaviours in early childhood.

Oral Health Promotion Information Resources

Listed below are key oral health promotion resources developed by the Dental Health Foundation. These resources are available for download from the DHF website, www.dentalhealth.ie. The DHF also provides hardcopies of resources to oral health professionals for distribution to patients in Dental Clinics and health promotion programmes in the community and educational settings.

The DHF is listed as an approved resource for Social and Personal Health Education (SPHE) primary schools programme and provides training resources for the Healthy Ireland Smart Start Programme for Preschool Services.

Additionally, the Maternity oral health information postcard for HSE Maternity Packs which are included in Eumom packs distributed to expectant Mums.

The Foundation has developed a number of general information postcards for all age cohorts. Additionally, the DHF collaborates with organisations to develop individual postcards/resources to meet the particular needs of their members/patients such as:

- iCan Oral Health Information Postcards in conjunction with the Irish Children's Arthritis Network for parents, children and teenagers with Temporomandibular Joint disorder (TMJ), Juvenile Idiopathic Arthritis (JIA) and Joint Hypermobility Syndrome
- Methadone Treatment Dental Advice in conjunction with the Capuchin Day Centre, and;
- Men's Oral Health in conjunction with Irish Men's Sheds Association

The DHF also developed a 'Special Olympics, Special Smiles – Report Card' in conjunction with Special Olympics Ireland as part of their Special Smiles project at the Special Olympics in June 2018.

Resources:

- Oral Health Information Postcards:
 - Maternity
 - 0-2 and 2-7 year olds
 - 8-12 and 13-17 year olds
 - Adults and Health Aging
 - Methadone Treatment Dental Advice
 - Men's Shed
 - iCAN look after my Child's Dental Health with JIA, JHS & TMJD (in conjunction with the Irish Children's Arthritis Network)
 - 13-17 Years, iCAN look after my Dental Health with JIA, JHS & TMJD (in conjunction with the Irish Children's Arthritis Network)

- Tooth-tips Posters for 0-2 and 2-7 Year Olds (English and Irish versions)
- Tooth Tips Fridge Magnet for 0-8 Year Olds
- Dental Bingo
- Fruit & Veg Bingo
- Baby Bottle Tooth Decay Poster
- Henry Bear Leaflet – in conjunction with the Dental and Cardiology Departments, Our Lady's Children Hospital, Crumlin
- Healthy Teeth for Life
- Mighty Mouth School Programme for 5-6 Year Olds (English and Irish versions)
- Brushing Chart
- Mouthguard Poster
- Save That Tooth Poster (English & Irish versions)
- Mouth, Head & Neck Cancer leaflet – MHNCAI (English & Irish versions)
- Mouth Cancer Awareness Infographic
- Sugar Infographic
- Acid Attack and Sugar Frequency Flyer
- Sugar Drinks Poster (Safe Food – oral health information provided by the DHF)

4. Advocacy and Communications

The Foundation provides strong advocacy to ensure the inclusion of oral health matters on the national agenda. DHF uses every opportunity to reduce health inequalities, promote health equity and strive for health and well-being by 'Making Every Contact Count'.

The DHF nurtures relationships with community groups, professional bodies (who have significant contact with the public in a health capacity), and the oral healthcare industry, ensuring a customer focused approach will remain the cornerstone of the Foundation's work programme.

The DHF represents oral health on a range of committees, engaged in partnership programmes and policy input, on mainstreaming oral health into the public health agenda. The Dental Health Foundation is a member of:

- Mouth, Health and Neck Cancer Awareness Ireland – founding member 2009
- Programme Board for Health Promotion MA/Postgraduate Diploma and Specialist Certificate programmes, National University of Ireland, Galway
- Alcohol Health Alliance
- Children's Rights Alliance
- HPV Vaccination Alliance
- Healthy Ireland Network

Mouth, Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Ireland

Mouth, Head & Neck Cancer Awareness Ireland (MHNCAI) Group was founded in 2009 to promote awareness in Ireland. The campaign was initiated primarily by people who had recovered from cancer, and was supported by the Dental Health Foundation, the Irish Cancer Society, and the university dental schools in Cork and Dublin. The Irish Dental Association became a partner in 2011 to make free examinations more accessible and to increase professional awareness. MHNCAI is a voluntary, unfunded, community focused group. Current membership:

- MHN Cancer Survivors
- Dental Health Foundation
- Dublin Dental University Hospital
- Cork University Dental School and Hospital
- Irish Cancer Society
- Irish Dental Association

- Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) Members

The Mission of MHNCAI is to work collaboratively to promote public and professional awareness of Mouth Head and Neck Cancer. Mouth Cancer Awareness Day (MCAD) was established by MHNCAI. The first MCAD was held at Dublin Dental University Hospital (DDUH) and Cork University Dental School and Hospital (CUDSH) in September 2010 and since 2011 with private dental practitioners. From 2010 until 2016 Mouth Cancer Awareness Day focused on encouraging the public to avail of a free oral examination provided by their local private dental practitioners and at the Cork and Dublin University Dental Schools and Hospitals.

The 2017 Mouth Cancer Awareness Day, 20th September, focused on the socially excluded and disadvantaged groups who may not attend for regular dental care. Dental examinations took place in Simon Community Care Centres in Dublin, Cork and Ballinasloe, Peter McVerry Trust, Merchants Quay Ireland and the Capuchin Day Care Centre for the Homeless.

MCAD 2018, 19th September, focused on a collaboration with Men's Sheds. Dentists gave mouth cancer awareness talks to various Men's Sheds across Ireland. The Dental Health Foundation and Mouth Cancer Awareness Ireland both availed of complimentary information stands at the Men's Shed Gathering 2018 at Páirc Uí Chaoimh, Cork, on 12th September 2018. Both stands received great interest and feedback from the delegates.

The objective of MCAD is to raise public and professional awareness and to stress the importance of early detection and referral. Many people are still unaware of the existence of mouth cancer as a disease which increasingly affects men and women of all ages including those who are not in 'at risk' categories such as smokers and heavy drinkers.

Now in its eighth year (2018) Mouth Cancer Awareness Day is held on the third Wednesday in September annually.

Currently, the majority of MHNC patients are diagnosed late resulting in poor survival rates and immense suffering. Changes must be put in place to help diagnose Mouth Head and Neck cancer earlier and give fair and equitable access to standardised care delivered by multi-disciplinary teams, including oral supportive care, rehabilitation and specialised dental care. With this in mind, MHNCAI was established to:

- promote public and professional awareness of Mouth Head & Neck Cancer
- highlight modifiable risk factors to promote disease prevention

- promote early detection to improve potential outcomes
- improve patient pathway before, during and following cancer treatment
- improve quality of life for Mouth, Head & Neck Cancer survivors
- promote increased co-operation between doctors, dentists, pharmacists and other healthcare professionals to improve the rate of early detection of MHNC

Programme Board for Health Promotion MA/Postgraduate Diploma and Specialist Certificate programmes, National University of Ireland, Galway. The Board meets on an annual basis to review the MA/Postgraduate Diploma and Specialist Certificate programmes in health promotion and discuss proposed course amendments/developments.

The Alcohol Health Alliance is a new initiative to support the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill 2015, a ground breaking piece of public health legislation that has the potential to save lives and to significantly reduce the harm caused by alcohol consumption in Ireland.

The Alcohol Health Alliance was established in March 2015 by the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland (RCPI) and Alcohol Action Ireland and is chaired by Prof Frank Murray, RCPI President and a liver specialist at Beaumont Hospital. This alliance brings together a wide range of public health campaigners including medical professionals, NGO's and charities whose mission is to reduce the damage caused to health by alcohol misuse. Currently the alliance has over 50 members.

The Alliance is guided by World Health Organization recommendations that “the alcohol industry has no role in the formulation of alcohol policies, which must be protected from distortion by commercial or vested interests”.

AHA Ireland will work together to:

- Campaign for the implementation of the Public Health (Alcohol) Bill, 2015
- Highlight the rising levels of alcohol-related health harm
- Support evidence-based solutions to reduce this harm
- Advocate for positive action to address the damage caused by alcohol misuse

The Children’s Rights Alliance is a coalition of almost 100 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working to secure the rights of children in Ireland, by campaigning for the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It aims to improve

the lives of all children under 18 years, through securing the necessary changes in Ireland's laws, policies and services.

The Alliance has identified the following as the most important potential levers for bringing about change:

- **Advocacy:**
The influence applied through engaging policy makers on the children's rights agenda, and associated lobbying and advocacy to advance that agenda.
- **Domestic, EU and UN Accountability:**
The requirements on Ireland to comply with obligations to the UN and EU, and procedures for Government accountability to the Oireachtas.
- **Constitutional Referendum:**
The commitment to hold a referendum to strengthen children's rights in the Constitution.
- **Political and Administrative Reconfiguration:**
The formation of a new Department of Children and Youth Affairs and associated drive to improve the state's services and supports to children.
- **Public Opinion:**
The concerns of the general public regarding gaps in child protection and welfare and in children's rights.
- **Expert Analysis and Opinion:**
The 'thought leadership' of acknowledged experts and the availability of useful data and research.

HPV Vaccination Alliance Alliance member organisations have signed a Contract Against Cancer. Under the contract, the HPV Vaccination Alliance:

- **Endorses** the HPV vaccine as a proven and safe way to protect from cancers which can destroy and end lives.
- **Realises** its obligation to do all we can to protect health and wellbeing by ensuring the facts prevail when it comes to the HPV vaccine.
- **Pledges** to raise awareness of the HPV vaccine and its benefits in stopping cancer and saving lives.

Healthy Ireland Network: The purpose of the Healthy Ireland Network is:

- To establish and grow an empowering national movement that treats health and wellbeing as an individual and collective responsibility;

- To support and advocate for the goals and vision of Healthy Ireland;
- To ensure the Healthy Ireland message is spread, understood, and acted on throughout Ireland.

Information Sessions and Conference Information Stands

The DHF has undertaken the dissemination of oral health promotion materials and information on the role of the DHF via information stands at the following oral health professional Conferences:

- IDA Annual Scientific Meeting (2015, 2016, 2017)
- Irish Dental Nurses Association (2018)
- Irish Society for Disability and Oral Health Annual Conference (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)
- Irish Men's Sheds Association (IMSA) (2018)
- Oral Health Promotion Research Group Annual Conference (2016, 2017)
- American Graduates – American Dental Society in Europe (2018)
- Mouth Cancer Awareness Day (2015, 2016, 2017)
- IDA Young Dentists Inaugural Conference (2018)
- IDA / HSE Dental Surgeons Conference (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)
- Faculty of Dentistry, Annual Scientific Meeting, Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)
- Irish Dental Hygienists Annual Conference (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)
- Youth Work Ireland (2015, 2016, 2017)
- Future Health Summit (2017)
- Irish Faculty of Primary Dental Care (IFPDC) Winter Scientific Meeting (2018)

Communications Strategy

The Dental Health Foundation's Communications Strategy and Action Plan (in press) will set out how the Foundation will promote oral health in Ireland and empower people to take responsibility for their oral health. It will outline how the DHF will communicate with the target audiences using a variety of communication channels ensuring the effective dissemination of the DHF's holistic health promotion messaging, increase the awareness of the DHF and foster the development of alliances.

DHF recognises that how we now communicate has changed dramatically in recent years and to meet this changing demand it uses a combination of communications methods for effective dissemination of evidence based information.

DHF Website

The site provides the public with evidence-based oral healthcare information in a clear and comprehensive manner. The DHF website is regularly updated with the latest news, publications and activities in oral health. It features a 'contact us' section where professionals and the general public can email their queries directly to the Foundation. Additionally, the DHF has developed an 'FAQ' -frequently asked questions - section in response to queries received by the DHF via email and by phone.

Publications and evidence-based resources produced by the Dental Health Foundation and other organisations such as the HSE and Safefood are made available through the Publications and Resources section.

DHF makes all of its publications and resources available to download free of charge from its website. The website is currently being updated so that visitors find the information that they require quickly and easily.

The DHF website is currently under redevelopment. The new website will be mobile friendly and includes an online ordering systems to make ordering DHF resources more user friendly and efficient.

DHF Facebook Page

Communication has changed radically in the last 10 years with the advent of social media. This has created both new challenges and opportunities in communicating health promotion messages.

Social Media now plays a very active and important role in ensuring effective dissemination of DHF health promotion messaging. Social media is people-oriented – it is a platform where family, friends, colleagues and strangers share their experiences, thoughts, and ideas in order to interact and discuss with the world at large. It is also an opportunity for DHF to interact with the public and all health and allied health professionals to encourage preventative measures and health promotion.

Facebook is seen as being effective at engaging general public audiences so DHF is using it to disseminate up-to-date information relating to the DHF's activities, evidence based health

promotion messages and tips on how to improve and maintain good oral health, by building a community and by engaging with different stakeholders.

DHF monitors media coverage to help it decide which stories are of interest for its target audiences on Facebook, by doing this it ensures that information relating to oral health and general health is current.

DHF has also found that it is important to be creative in its messaging by the use of visual messages such as memes and infographics.

Public Health Policy Contribution – (2015-2017)

The role of advocacy has been a cornerstone of the Foundation’s work which has involved informing and educating government and community leaders and decision makers about specific issues that will have an impact on the oral health and wellbeing of Irish people. In fulfilment of this role the Foundation has contributed to a range of public policies:

- Submission from the Dental Health Foundation to the draft report for public consultation ‘Health technology assessment (HTA) of extending the national immunisation schedule to include HPV vaccination of boys’ (2018)
- Submission from the Dental Health Foundation to the Draft National Risk Assessment (2018)
- Submission to the Department of Finance Consultation on Sugar-Sweetened Drinks (SSD) Tax (2017)
- Submission from Dental Health Foundation to the Working Group on Standards for School Age Childcare (2017)
- Submission from the Dental Health Foundation to the Public Consultation on Autism Review (2017)
- Evidence Review of Best Health for Children 2005 – Oral/Dental Health (2017)
- Consultation on a Healthy Workplaces Framework for Ireland (2017)
- Submission (as a member of Mouth Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Ireland) to the Consultation on the Health Information and Quality Authority Health technology assessment of smoking cessation interventions (2017)
- Submission from the Dental Health Foundation to the Public Consultation Tattooing and Body Piercing Infection Control Guidance (2016)
- Submission to the Consultation on the New National Drugs Strategy (2016)
- Submission to the European Pillar of Social Rights (2016)
- Submission from the Dental Health Foundation to the Consultation on the Statement of Strategy for Education and Skills 2016-2018 (2016)
- Submission to the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) in response to the Public Consultation on the CRA’s Statement of Strategy 2016-2018 (2016)
- Submission (as a member of Mouth Head and Neck Cancer Awareness Ireland) to the Consultation on the Development of a National Cancer Strategy for 2016-2025 (2015)
- Submission to Aras Attracta Review Group Consultation Response Booklet For; “Building Confidence, Improving Lives, Delivering Change” (2015)

- Submission to the Consultation on the Development of a National Maternity Strategy (2015)
- Submission to the Health Information and Quality Authority Corporate Plan 2016 -2018: Stakeholder Pre-consultation Survey (2015)
- Submission to the Consultation on the Draft Governance and Management Standards for the Health Identifiers Operator in Ireland (2015)

Governance

The Dental Health Foundation is a charitable trust. Its 'Declaration of Trust' outlines the governance and management requirements of the organisation. The Foundation is governed by a Board of voluntary Trustees.

DHF Board of Trustees

Dr. Mary Coleman, BDS., MDPH (Chair)

Dr Paddy Crotty, BDentSc FDS, RCS (Edin)

Dr. Mairead Harding, BDS, MDPH, PhD, MFGDP (UK), FDS RCPS (Glasg), PGDipTLHE

Mr Stephen Grissing CFA (from December 2018)

Mr Stephen McDermott, BDent Sc, MSc (until November 2016)

The Board of Trustees ensure that:

- An Annual Report and Set of Audited Accounts are submitted to the grant authorities in line with contractual agreements with funders.
- An annual Tax Clearance Certificate issued to the Dental Health Foundation by the Revenue Commissioners is also submitted.
- An annual review of current exchequer funding arrangements provided from the Department of Health (DOH) and HSE is conducted to ensure adequate provisions are in place. Regular activity updates and funding analysis are provided to the DOH and HSE in line with contractual agreements and best practice.

DHF Staff

Ms Patricia Gilsenan O'Neill, BSc (Hons) Information Systems, MBA
Chief Executive

Ms Etain Kett, Grad (IFST) Dip. Public Relations, MPRII
Public Affairs & Communications Manager

Ms Sandra Byrne, HNDip (Bus), CertHP
Project Officer

Ms Eimear Corrigan, BA (Hons) History, PGDip Social Policy & Practice (Nov 2017 – Nov 2018)
Administrator

Ms Michelle Spearman-Geraghty, RDN (April 2017 – April 2018)
Business Manager – National Oral Health Policy

Dr Conor Kennedy, BA, MA, PhD (until October 2016)
Project Officer – National Oral Health Policy

Auditors:

Byrne Curtin Kelly
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Orpen Franks Solicitors
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Dublin 4

Bankers:

Bank of Ireland
O'Connell Street
Dublin 1

Charity Number: CHY 6200

Charities Regulatory Authority Number: 20010683

The Foundation's website is: www.dentalhealth.ie

The Foundation is also on Facebook